Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism (or **totalitarian rule**) refers to authoritarian political systems where the state recognizes no limits to its authority and strives to regulate every aspect of public and private life wherever feasible. Totalitarian regimes stay in power through all-encompassing propaganda campaigns disseminated through the state-controlled mass media, use of a single party usually defined by political repression, personality cultism, control over the economy, regulation and restriction of speech, mass surveillance, and widespread use of terror. The concept of totalitarianism was first developed in a positive sense in the 1920s by the Italian fascists, and became prominent in Western anti-communist political discourse during the Cold War era in order to highlight perceived similarities between Nazi Germany and other fascist regimes on the one hand, and Soviet communism on the other.

Some of the worst tyrannies of our day genuinely are "vowed" to the service of mankind, yet can function only by pitting neighbor against neighbor. The all-seeing eye of a totalitarian regime is usually the watchful eye of the next-door neighbor. ~ Eric Hoffer

Arranged alphabetically by author or source:
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A

- [M]odern totalitarianism can be defined as the establishment, by means of the state of exception, of a legal civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system.
  - Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/NTZBBfnmYowC?hl=en&gbpv=0) (2005), chapter One, p. 2.
- **Somebody once declared that the only two political theories that are completely consistent are anarchy and totalitarianism.** Anarchy fully embraces the concept of self, totalitarianism fully rejects that concept. Statism always degenerates into totalitarianism.
  - Darrell Anderson, in "What Is Liberty?" (http://www.simpleliberty.org/essays/what_is_liberty.htm)
- **The totalitarian attempt at global conquest and total domination has been the destructive way out of all impasses. Its victory may coincide with the destruction of humanity; wherever it has ruled, it has begun to destroy the essence of man.** Yet to turn our backs on the destructive forces of the century is of little avail.
  The trouble is that our period has so strangely intertwined the good with the bad that without the imperialists' "expansion for expansion's sake," the world might never have become one; without the bourgeoisie's political device of "power for power's sake," the extent of human strength might never have been discovered; without the fictitious world of totalitarian movements, in which with unparalleled clarity the essential uncertainties of our time have been spelled out, we might have been driven to our doom without ever becoming aware of what has been happening.
  And if it is true that in the final stages of totalitarianism an absolute evil appears (absolute because it can no longer be deduced from humanly comprehensible motives), **it is also true that without it we might never have known the truly radical nature of Evil.**

- Hannah Arendt, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), Preface to first edition, written in the summer of 1950

- **Totalitarianism begins in contempt for what you have. The second step is the notion: "Things must change—no matter how, Anything is better than what we have." Totalitarian rulers organize this kind of mass sentiment, and by organizing it articulate it, and by articulating it make the people somehow love it.** They were told before, thou shalt not kill; and they didn't kill. Now they are told, thou shalt kill; and **although they think it's very difficult to kill, they do it because it's now part of the code of behavior. They learn whom to kill and how to kill and how to do it together. This is the much talked about *Gleichschaltung*—the coordination process. You are coordinated not with the powers that be, but with your neighbor—coordinated with the majority. But instead of communicating with the other you are now glued to him. And you feel of course marvelous. Totalitarianism appeals to the very dangerous emotional needs of people who live in complete isolation and in fear of one another.**

  - Hannah Arendt, *Hannah Arendt: From an Interview (http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1978/10/26/hannah-arendt-from-an-interview/)*. Comments made in 1974 during an interview with the French writer Roger Errera and published in October 26, 1978 issue of The NewYork Review of Books Interview. Copyright © 1978 Mary McCarthy West, Trustee. Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20170222205715/http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1978/10/26/hannah-arendt-from-an-interview/) via Wayback Machine of the Internet Archive on February 22, 2017.

Totalitarianism appeals to the very dangerous emotional needs of people who live in complete isolation and in fear of one another. ~ Hannah Arendt

B

- Stalin...[has] compelled us to pass the judgement we had hitherto refused to register. **His Russia is a totalitarian state, like another, as brutal towards the rights of others, as careless of its plighted word.** If this man ever understood the international creed of socialism, he long ago forgot it. In this land the absolute power has wrought its customary effects of corruption.

  - H. N. Brailsford, *Reynold's News* (3 December 1939) , as quoted *The Last Dissenter: H.N. Brailsford and His World*,by F. M. Leventhal (p. 269).

The power of the Executive to cast a man into prison without formulating any charge known to the law, and particularly to deny him the judgment of his peers, is in the highest degree odious and is the foundation of all totalitarian government whether Nazi or Communist. ~ Winston Churchill

C

- Nationalism leads to totalitarianism, and totalitarianism leads to idolatry. It becomes not a principle of politics but a new religion and, let me add, a false religion.

  - Robert Cecil, 1st Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, in "The Future of Civilization" (1 June 1938) (http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1937/chelwood-lecture.html)

- The power of the Executive to cast a man into prison without formulating any charge known to the law, and particularly to deny him the judgment of his peers, is in the highest degree odious and is the foundation of all totalitarian government whether Nazi or Communist.

- Winston Churchill, as quoted in *In The Highest Degree Odious : Detention Without Trial in Wartime Britain* (1992), by A. W. B. Simpson

When *Rhinoceros* was produced in Germany, it had fifty curtain calls. The next day the papers wrote, "Ionesco shows us how we became Nazis." But in Moscow, they wanted me to rewrite it and make sure that it dealt with Nazism and not with their kind of totalitarianism. ~ Eugène Ionesco

- We are confronted with another theme. It is not a new theme; it leaps out upon us from the Dark Ages – racial persecution, religious intolerance, deprivation of free speech, the conception of the citizen as a mere soulless fraction of the State. To this has been added the cult of war. Children are to be taught in their earliest schooling the delights and profits of conquest and aggression. A whole mighty community has been drawn painfully, by severe privations, into a warlike frame. They are held in this condition, which they relish no more than we do, by a party organisation, several millions strong, who derive all kinds of profits, good and bad, from the upkeep of the regime. Like the Communists, the Nazis tolerate no opinion but their own. Like the Communists, they feed on hatred. Like the Communists, they must seek, from time to time, and always at shorter intervals, a new target, a new prize, a new victim. The Dictator, in all his pride, is held in the grip of his Party machine. He can go forward; he cannot go back. He must blood his hounds and show them sport, or else, like Actaeon of old, be devoured by them. All-strong without, he is all-weak within. As Byron wrote a hundred years ago: "These Pagod things of Sabre sway, with fronts of brass and feet of clay."
  - Winston Churchill, Broadcast to the United States and to London (https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1930-1938-the-wilderness/the-defence-of-freedom-and-peace-the-lights-are-going-out/), 16 October 1938

Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it. ~ George Orwell

- No one must, however, underrate the power and efficiency of a totalitarian state. Where the whole population of a great country, amiable, good-hearted, peace-loving people are gripped by the neck and by the hair by a Communist or a Nazi tyranny – for they are the same things spelt in different ways – the rulers for the time being can exercise a power for the purposes of war and external domination before which the ordinary free parliamentary societies are at a grievous practical disadvantage. We have to recognise this. And then, on top of all, comes this wonderful mastery of the air which our century has discovered, but of which, alas, mankind has so far shown itself unworthy. Here is this air power with its claim to torture and terrorise the women and children, the civil population of neighbouring countries. This combination of medieval passion, a party caucus, the weapons of modern science, and the blackmailing power of air-bombing, is the most monstrous menace to peace, order and fertile progress that has appeared in the world since the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century.
  - Winston Churchill, Broadcast to the United States and to London (https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1930-1938-the-wilderness/the-defence-of-freedom-and-peace-the-lights-are-going-out/), 16 October 1938

E

- My awareness of postwar foreign policy really began with this announcement of the Truman Doctrine in the spring of 1947, my junior year of high school. Truman proposed U.S. readiness to support "free peoples" anywhere from the imposition of "totalitarian regimes," a phrase he used four times in his speech. The phrase conveyed an essential equivalence between Communism and Nazism, and between Stalin and

Hitler. It implied that the challenge we faced in World War II had not really ended in 1945. As a child of that war, and trusting Western leadership, I accepted that definition of the challenge and at sixteen, too young to have taken part in the earlier campaign, I was ready to rise to it. As I followed the news in subsequent years about the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948, the Berlin blockade later that spring, the Stalinist regimes and political trials in Russia and Eastern Europe, and later the North Korean attack, I came gradually to accept all the Cold War premises and attitudes.

  - Daniel Ellsberg, *The Doomsday Machine: Confessions from a Nuclear War Planner* (2017)

Strangely, it is always America that is described as degenerate and 'fascist', while it is solely in Europe that actual dictatorships and totalitarian regimes spring up. ~ Jean-François Revel

- Looking back, the key premise was the equation of Stalin and his successors to Hitler. This was first of all in their internal totalitarian controls and ruthless repression of dissent, where the analogy (especially under Stalin) was valid. I've never lost my well-founded abhorrence of the domestic tyranny of Stalinist-style regimes—whether in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, China, North Korea, Vietnam, or Cuba. More problematic, in retrospect—in fact, I would now say, flat wrong, recklessly so—was the presumption that such regimes, like Nazism, had an insatiable appetite for expansion, which they were determined to satisfy by military aggression where necessary and feasible. In particular, it was presumed that the Communist regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe—now armed with nuclear weapons as well as superior conventional forces—posed a direct military threat to Western Europe and America even greater than Hitler's. Moreover, the equation of Communist regimes with Hitler ruled out any attempt at meaningful negotiations for the resolution of conflicts or arms control. Nothing other than full military preparedness for imminent warfare could influence or "contain" the Soviet threat to the "free world."

  - Daniel Ellsberg, *The Doomsday Machine: Confessions from a Nuclear War Planner* (2017)

The economic dictatorship of the monopolies and the political dictatorship of the totalitarian state are the outgrowth of the same political objectives… to reduce all the countless expressions of social life to the mechanical tempo of the machine … ~ Rudolf Rocker

G

- More than a half a century ago, I was privileged to take the last course Hans J. Morgenthau taught at the University of Chicago. Among the many wise things he said that have remained with me in the years since was his relating of an anecdote about the difference between democracy, authoritarianism and totalitarianism. Morgenthau said that there were of course many differences but he insisted that the key one was this: **in a democratic political system, everything not prohibited is permitted; in an authoritarian regime, everything that [is] not permitted is prohibited; and in a totalitarian one, everything permitted is compulsory.**

  - Paul A. Goble, "Putin's Russia Moving toward One Definition of Totalitarianism where Everything Permitted is Compulsory, Grashchenkov Suggests" (https://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.com/2024/10/putins-russia-moving-toward-one.html), *Window on Eurasia* (October 20, 2024)

- Neither Putin nor Trump is a fascist in the classical sense, and neither in fact are neo-fascists, Vladimir Pastukhov says. Moreover, the regimes that Putin has established and that Trump is working to create cannot be called by either of those terms. Instead, both the ideology of the two is better labeled post-fascist. Their new totalitarian ideologies, the London-based Russian analyst says, "do not directly follow from nor are they directly connected with the fascist ideas of the last century. But they are related to them. Their chief

distinguishing feature is their undisguised hostility to democracy and readiness to throw out the entire legacy of liberalism".

- Paul A. Goble, "Post-Fascism, a New Totalitarian Ideology, Now Spreading 'Especially in Russia and the US,' Pastukhov Says" (https://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.com/2025/03/post-fascism-new-totalitarian-ideology.html), *Window on Eurasia* (March 12, 2025)

H

- **People who live in the post-totalitarian system know only too well that the question of whether one or several political parties are in power, and how these parties define and label themselves, is of far less importance than the question of whether or not it is possible to live like a human being.**
  - Václav Havel, in "The Power of the Powerless" in *Living in Truth* (1986)
- **We had all become used to the totalitarian system and accepted it as an unchangeable fact and thus helped to perpetuate it.** In other words, we are all — though naturally to differing extents — responsible for the operation of the totalitarian machinery. **None of us is just its victim. We are all also its co-creators.** … Those who rebelled against totalitarian rule and those who simply managed to remain themselves and think freely, were all persecuted. We should not forget any of those who paid for our present freedom in one way or another.
  - Václav Havel, in his New Year's address, Prague (1 January 1990)
- **Societies such as ours that once had democratic traditions or periods when relative openness was possible are often the most easily seduced into totalitarian systems because those who rule and build totalitarian structures continue to pay outward fealty to the ideals, practices and forms of the old system.**
  - Chris Hedges, "Our Only Hope Will Come Through Rebellion (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOlg_2qAbUA)," 29th March 2014, 40:35
- The long campaign against Julian and WikiLeaks is a window into the collapse of the rule of law, the rise of what the political philosopher Sheldon Wolin calls our system of "inverted totalitarianism," a form of totalitarianism that maintains the fictions of the old capitalist democracy, including its institutions, iconography, patriotic symbols and rhetoric, but internally has surrendered total control to the dictates of global corporations...
  The criminal ruling class has all of us locked in its death grip. It cannot be reformed. It has abolished the rule of law. It obscures and falsifies the truth. It seeks the consolidation of its obscene wealth and power. And so, to quote the Queen of Hearts, metaphorically of course, I say, "Off with their heads."
  - Chris Hedges, Revisiting the case of Julian Assange and the reality of the "rule of law", *Salon* (https://www.salon.com/2021/06/15/revisiting-the-case-of-julian-assange-and-the-reality-of-the-rule-of-law/) (15 June 2021)
- Some of the worst tyrannies of our day genuinely are "vowed" to the service of mankind, yet can function only by pitting neighbor against neighbor. **The all-seeing eye of a totalitarian regime is usually the watchful eye of the next-door neighbor.** In a Communist state love of neighbor may be classed as counter-revolutionary.
  - Eric Hoffer, in *The Ordeal of Change* (1963), Ch. 11: Brotherhood
- It is probably true that business corrupts everything it touches. It corrupts politics, sports, literature, art, labor unions and so on. But business also corrupts and undermines monolithic totalitarianism. Capitalism is at its liberating best in a noncapitalist environment.
  - Eric Hoffer, in "Thoughts of Eric Hoffer, Including: 'Absolute Faith Corrupts Absolutely,'" in *The New York Times Magazine* (25 April 1971), p. 50.

- **The Savior who wants to turn men into angels is as much a hater of human nature as the totalitarian despot who wants to turn them into puppets.**
  - Eric Hoffer, in *Reflections on the Human Condition* (1973) Section 13
- We take for granted the need to escape the self. Yet the self can also be a refuge. In totalitarian countries the great hunger is for private life. Absorption in the minutiae of an individual existence is the only refuge from the apocalyptic madhouse staged by maniacal saviors of humanity.
  - Eric Hoffer, in *Reflections on the Human Condition* (1973) Section 55

I

- **Béranger represented the modern man. He is a victim of totalitarianism — of both kinds of totalitarianism, of the Right and of the Left.** When *Rhinoceros* was produced in Germany, it had fifty curtain calls. The next day the papers wrote, “Ionesco shows us how we became Nazis.” But in Moscow, they wanted me to rewrite it and make sure that it dealt with Nazism and not with their kind of totalitarianism. In Buenos Aires, the military government thought it was an attack on Perónism.
  - Eugène Ionesco, on the anit-totalitarian themes in one of his plays, in "Eugene Ionesco, The Art of Theater No. 6" interviewed by Shusha Guppy, in *Paris Review* (Fall 1984), No. 93 (http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2956/the-art-of-theater-no-6-eugene-ionesco)
- **I have never been to the Right, nor have I been a Communist, because I have experienced, personally, both forms of totalitarianism.** It is those who have never lived under tyranny who call me petit bourgeois.
  - Eugène Ionesco, in "Eugene Ionesco, The Art of Theater No. 6" interviewed by Shusha Guppy, in *Paris Review* (Fall 1984), No. 93

K

- The advantage to efficiency of the decentralization of decisions and of individual responsibility is even greater, perhaps, than the nineteenth century supposed; and the reaction against self-interest may have gone too far. ...**[I]ndividualism**, if it can be **purged of its defects and its abuses**, is the best safeguard of personal liberty... compared with any other system, it greatly widens the field for the exercise of personal choice. It **is** also **the best safeguard of the variety of life... the loss of which is the greatest of all losses of the homogeneous or totalitarian state. For this variety preserves the traditions** which embody the most secure and successful choices **of former generations; it colours the present with the diversification of its fancy; and, being the handmaid of experiment** as well as of tradition and of fancy, **it is the most powerful instrument to better the future.**
  - John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936) Ch. 24, "Concluding Notes" p. 380. (https://archive.org/details/generaltheoryofe0000unse/page/380/mode/1up)
- The destructive work of totalitarian machinery, whether or not this word is used, is usually supported by a special kind of primitive social philosophy. It proclaims not only that the common good of 'society' has priority over the interests of individuals, but that the very existence of individuals as persons is reducible to the existence of the social 'whole'; in other words, personal existence is, in a strange sense, unreal. This is a convenient foundation for any ideology of slavery.
  - Leszek Kołakowski, "Totalitarianism and the Virtue of the Lie", as quoted in *Is God Happy? Selected Essays* (2013), Basic Books, p. 57

L

- What may be most consistent about gender norms is the degree of their totalitarianism. A child, said Connell, does have the option to "collude, resist, or conform" when faced with the prevailing gender codes. If he resist, he may reap the benefits of pride, integrity, and a certain liberation. But he will also pay a price. As sociologist Laurie Mandel put it, "To deviate is not accepted."
  - Judith Levine, *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children from Sex* (2002), Judith Levine, forward by Joycelyn Elders, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, ISBN 0816640068 p. 156-157 [1] (https://www.ipce.info/library_3/pdf/harmfultominors.pdf)
- The totalitarian states, whether of the fascist or the communist persuasion, are more than superficially alike as dictatorships, in the suppression of dissent, and in operating planned and directed economies. They are profoundly alike.
  - Walter Lippmann, *The Good Society*, Transaction Publications (2005) p. 89. First published in 1937.
- **It does not matter whether the right to govern is hereditary or obtained with the consent of the governed. A State is absolute in the sense which I have in mind when it claims the right to a monopoly of all the force within the community, to make war, to make peace, to conscript life, to tax, to establish and dis-establish property, to define crime, to punish disobedience, to control education, to supervise the family, to regulate personal habits, and to censor opinions. The modern State claims all of these powers, and, in the matter of theory, there is no real difference in the size of the claim between communists, fascists, and democrats.**
  - Walter Lippmann, *A Preface to Morals*, News Brunswick: NJ, Transaction Publishers (1982) p. 80. First published in 1929.

M

- Our formula is this: everything in the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.
  - Benito Mussolini, "Speech for the third anniversary of the march on Rome" (Milan - October 28, 1925)
- The Fascist conception of the State is all embracing; outside of it no human or spiritual values can exist, much less have value. Thus understood, Fascism, is totalitarian, and the Fascist State — a synthesis and a unit inclusive of all values — interprets, develops, and potentates the whole life of a people.
  - Benito Mussolini, "Doctrine of Fascism" (1932)

N

- Totalitarianism is an affair of mass attitudes.
  - Robert Nisbet

O

- The Spanish war and other events in 1936-7 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. **Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it. It seems to me nonsense, in a period like our own, to think that one can avoid writing of such subjects.**
  - George Orwell, in "Why I Write," *Gangrel* (Summer 1946)

- **Totalitarianism … does not so much promise an age of faith as an age of schizophrenia. A society becomes totalitarian when its structure becomes flagrantly artificial: that is, when its ruling class has lost its function but succeeds in clinging to power by force or fraud.** Such a society, no matter how long it persists, can never afford to become either tolerant or intellectually stable. **It can never permit either the truthful recording of facts or the emotional sincerity that literary creation demands.** But to be corrupted by totalitarianism one does not have to live in a totalitarian country. The mere prevalence of certain ideas can spread a kind of poison that makes one subject after another impossible for literary purposes. **Wherever there is an enforced orthodoxy — or even two orthodoxies, as often happens — good writing stops.** This was well illustrated by the Spanish civil war. To many English intellectuals the war was a deeply moving experience, but not an experience about which they could write sincerely. **There were only two things that you were allowed to say, and both of them were palpable lies: as a result, the war produced acres of print but almost nothing worth reading.**
  - George Orwell, in *The Prevention of Literature* (1946)
- Since 1930 I had seen little evidence that the USSR was progressing towards anything that one could truly call Socialism. On the contrary, I was struck by clear signs of its transformation into a hierarchical society, in which the rulers have no more reason to give up their power than any other ruling class. Moreover, the workers and intelligentsia in a country like England cannot understand that the USSR of today is altogether different from what it was in 1917. It is partly that they do not want to understand (i.e. they want to believe that, somewhere, a really Socialist country does actually exist), and partly that, **being accustomed to comparative freedom and moderation in public life, totalitarianism is completely incomprehensible to them.**
  - George Orwell, in his original preface to *Animal Farm*; as published in *George Orwell : Some Materials for a Bibliography* (1953) by Ian R. Willison
- **The fallacy is to believe that under a dictatorial government you can be free *inside*.** Quite a number of people console themselves with this thought, now that totalitarianism in one form or another is visibly on the up-grade in every part of the world. Out in the street the loudspeakers bellow, the flags flutter from the rooftops, the police with their tommy-guns prowl to and fro, the face of the Leader, four feet wide, glares from every hoarding; but up in the attics the secret enemies of the regime can record their thoughts in perfect freedom — that is the idea, more or less.
  - George Orwell, in "As I Please," *Tribune* (28 April 1944)

P

- My mind is appalled at the thought of a political party having control of all the details that go to make up the sum total of our lives. Think of it for an instant, that the party in power shall have all authority to dictate the kind of books that shall be used in our schools and universities, government officials editing, printing, and circulating our literature, histories, magazines and press, to say nothing of the thousand and one activities of life that a people engage in, in a civilized society.
  - Lucy Parsons, *The Principles of Anarchism (http://web.archive.org/web/20030626013810/http://www.tao.ca/~lucyparsons/ThePrinciplesofAnarchism.html)*, lecture printed without date of publication sometime in the 1890s

R

- Strangely, it is always America that is described as degenerate and 'fascist', **while it is solely in Europe that actual dictatorships and totalitarian regimes spring up.**
  - Jean-François Revel, "Europe's Anti-American Obsession" (http://web.archive.org/web/20031204174924/http://theamericanenterprise.org/issues/articleid.17764/article_detail.asp) (2003), *The View From Abroad*, The American Enterprise.

- **The economic dictatorship of the monopolies and the political dictatorship of the totalitarian state are the outgrowth of the same political objectives, and the directors of both have the presumption to try to reduce all the countless expressions of social life to the mechanical tempo of the machine and to tune everything organic to the lifeless machine of the political apparatus.**
  - Rudolf Rocker, in *Anarcho-Syndicalism* (1938), Ch. 1 "Anarchism: Its Aims and Purposes"

S

- Earlier autocracies had come nowhere near to such intensity of control over their societies. Important things changed in the twentieth century. One was the development of technology allowing rapid communication, especially telephones, the telegraph, railways and aircraft. With the expansion of literacy and numeracy, the opportunity for administrative and ideological penetration had never been greater. A second factor was of equal importance. Even the most ambitious dictatorships of the past had shied away from trampling down many traditions and eradicating groups and organisations. Political movements were formed after the nineteenth century to turn their societies upside down and reconstruct them in their own image; and these movements - the communists on the left and the fascists on the right - destroyed, wherever possible, every vestige of autonomous association. They had a totalising perspective. Nothing was to be regarded as unpolitical. The totalitarian rulers had no respect for private life. They pulled the media, sport, and recreation into their grasp. They eliminated all opposition. They filled the jails and conducted a campaign of permanent terror. They poured the bottles of their ideology into the minds of those whom they ruled.
  - Robert Service, *Comrades! A History of World Communism* (2007), p. 5

T

- Popper believed that any idea of Utopia is necessarily closed owing to the fact that it chokes its own refutations. The simple notion of a good society that cannot be left open for falsification is totalitarian. I learned from Popper, in addition to the difference between an open and a closed society, that between an open and a closed mind.
  - Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *Fooled by Randomness: The Hidden Role of Chance in Life and in the Markets* (2001) Seven: The Problem of Induction | Sir Karl's Promoting Agent | *Open Society*
- From the point of view of fundamental human liberties there is little to choose between communism, socialism, and national socialism. They all are examples of the collectivist or totalitarian state … in its essentials not only is completed socialism the same as communism but it hardly differs from fascism.
  - Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Socialist Tragedy*, Macmillan (1951), pp. 241-242
- **There isn't any difference in totalitarian states. I don't care what you call them, Nazi, Communist or Fascist…**
  - Harry S. Truman, (Comment on May 13, 1947), *Public Papers of the President of the United States, Harry S. Truman. Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, January 1 to December 31, 1947* (Washington D.C., 1963), p. 238

W

- The French writer, Albert Camus, once lamented that "man eventually becomes accustomed to everything". I have always believed that this is an unjustly pessimistic view of our human condition; and in recent weeks I have seen enough to convince me that Camus, on this point at least, was wrong: 30,000 East Germans abandoning home, friends, jobs, everything, to escape to a new life of opportunity but also uncertainty in the West; thousands of Soviet miners striking not for more pay, but for better supplies; the joy of Poles as they greet their first non-Communist Prime Minister in 40 years; over a million inhabitants of the Baltic states forming a human chain to protest against the forced annexation of their nations; demonstrators in Prague

braving the security forces to mark the 21st anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion; or in Leipzig calling for freedom of speech. Clearly the peoples of the East have not become accustomed to their lot. Totalitarian rule has not made people less attracted by freedom, democracy and self-determination. The opposite is true. Nor has it made them incapable of exercising these values through political organization and self-expression: look at the debates in the new Congress of the People's Deputies, the activities of the popular fronts, Solidarity in Poland or the opposition parties in Hungary. The demand for pluralism and reform can now be heard in every Eastern nation.

- Manfred Wörner, Address given at the 35th Annual Session of the North Atlantic Assembly (https://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1989/s891009a_e.htm), 9 October 1989

See also

- Anti-fascism
- Authoritarianism
- Communism
- Corruption
- Deception
- Fascism
- Imperialism
- Military Industrial complex
- Nazism
- *Nineteen Eighty-Four*
- Main stream news
- Rule of law
- Oligarchy
- Tyranny

External links

- "Totalitarianism" at the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (http://www.iep.utm.edu/totalita)

Social and political philosophy	[Collapse]
Ideologies	Anarchism ◉ *Aristocratic Radicalism* (Nietzsche • Brandes...) ◉ Autarchism ◉ Ba'athism (• Aflaq • al-Assad • Hussein) ◉ Communism ◉ (Neo-)Confucianism ◉ Conservatism ◉ Constitutionalism ◉ *Dark Enlightenment* ◉ Environmentalism ◉ Fascism (• *Islamo-* • Eco- • Francoism...) **vs.** Nazism ◉ Feminism (• Anarcha- • Radical • Gender-critical • Second-wave...) ◉ *Formalism*/(Neo-)cameralism ◉ Freudo-Marxism ◉ Gaddafism/*Third International Theory* ◉ Legalism ◉ Leninism/*Vanguardism* ◉ Juche (• Kim Il-sung • Kim Jong Il • Kim Jong Un...) ◉ Liberalism ◉ Libertarianism/Laissez-faire Capitalism ◉ Maoism ◉ Marxism ◉ Mohism ◉ Republicanism ◉ Social democracy ◉ Socialism ◉ Stalinism ◉ Straussianism ◉ Syndicalism ◉ Xi Jinping thought ◉ *New Monasticism* (• MacIntyre • Dreher...)
Modalities	Absolutism **vs.** Social constructionism/Relativism ◉ Autarky/Autonomy **vs.** Heteronomy ◉ Authoritarianism/Totalitarianism ◉ Colonialism **vs.** Imperialism ◉ Communitarianism **vs.** Liberalism ◉ Elitism **vs.** Populism/Majoritarianism/Egalitarianism ◉ Individualism **vs.** Collectivism ◉ Nationalism **vs.** Cosmopolitanism ◉ Particularism **vs.** Universalism ◉ Modernism/Progressivism **vs.** Postmodernism ◉ Reactionism/Traditionalism **vs.** Futurism/Transhumanism
Concepts	Alienation ◉ *Anarcho-tyranny* ◉ Anomie ◉ Authority ◉ *Conquest's Laws of Politics* ◉ Duty ◉ Eugenics ◉ Elite ◉ Elite theory ◉ Emancipation ◉ Equality ◉ Freedom ◉ Government ◉ Hegemony ◉ Hierarchy ◉ *Iron law of oligarchy* ◉ Justice ◉ Law ◉ Monopoly ◉ Natural law ◉ *Noblesse oblige* ◉ Norms ◉ Obedience ◉ Peace ◉ Pluralism ◉ *Polyarchy* ◉ Power ◉ Propaganda ◉ Property ◉ Revolt ◉ Rebellion ◉ Revolution ◉ Rights ◉ Ruling class ◉ Social contract ◉ Social inequality ◉ Society ◉ State ◉ Tocqueville effect ◉ *Totalitarian democracy* ◉ War ◉ Utopia
Government	Aristocracy ◉ Autocracy ◉ Bureaucracy ◉ Dictatorship ◉ Democracy ◉ Meritocracy ◉ Monarchy ◉ Ochlocracy ◉ Oligarchy ◉ Plutocracy ◉ Technocracy ◉ Theocracy ◉ Tyranny

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